



Iowa Department of Natural Resources

For Immediate Release

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DNR SEEKS PARTNER TO MANAGE HONEY CREEK RESORT STATE PARK

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DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is issuing a Request for Proposals to hire a hotel management company to run Honey Creek Resort State Park. Construction of the facility is well underway and on schedule to open summer 2008.

The DNR is seeking a partner to manage the daily operations of the state park's lodge, aquatic center, convention center, restaurant, and golf course for five years. The DNR and other project partners will be responsible for providing extensive educational programming and nature-based activities at the facility.

This is the second time the DNR has sought a hotel management company for Honey Creek. In spring 2006, Regency Hotel Management of Sioux Falls, South Dakota was selected to perform the dual role of construction manager and hotel manager. The DNR and Regency entered into a construction management agreement that remains in place today. However, a hotel management agreement was never finalized and is no longer being negotiated between the two parties.

“Regency has provided guidance to this point, and now we are ready to find a partner that will take Honey Creek Resort State Park to the next level in customer service and quality for our state park visitors,” said Terry Montgomery, project administrator for Honey Creek Resort State Park. “We have an exciting vision and expectations for success, and we anticipate finding an experienced hotel management company that will embrace that vision.”

The Honey Creek Resort State Park will initially include a 105-room lodge, a convention center accommodating up to 300 people, restaurant, lounge, indoor aquatic center, 18-

hole championship golf course, spa, beach, boat ramp, boat docking facilities and hiking and biking trails. The resort complex will be across the bay from the existing 850-acre state park on the shore of Lake Rathbun in south-central Iowa. An activity center, day-use shelters and family/group cabins are also slated to be built in future stages of the project.

The resort complex has been designed to accommodate groups and families with a wide range of outdoor interests and experience. The project also highlights a strong conservation ethic with the lodge facilities designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) certification standards and the golf course being built to meet Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program certification.

"Honey Creek Resort State Park is being designed as the ultimate outdoor recreation destination in Iowa. We believe this experience will be the springboard to a greater appreciation and lifelong participation in our natural resources, from wildlife watching, hiking and biking, to fishing and hunting," said Montgomery.

In addition to the mixture of family-oriented activities such as the golf course, trails and aquatic center, Montgomery said the destination park will showcase the expertise of DNR staff with educational opportunities to foster a greater understanding and admiration of Iowa's natural resources.

The principal financing source for the project is \$28 million in bond proceeds that will be paid over a 30-year period with revenues generated by the resort. Local support for the project has been demonstrated through financial, equipment, labor and other in-kind donations. Rathbun Regional Water, Chariton Valley Electrical Cooperative and Iowa Telecom are contributing more than \$2 million in utility systems. Appanoose and Monroe counties, Rathbun Lake Resort, Inc. and private contributors have committed more than \$2 million, some of which will be repaid from hotel/motel tax receipts.

For more information, contact Terry Montgomery at 515-402-7413.

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